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SIPDIS

STATE FOR INL
JUSTICE FOR OIA AND AFMLS
TREASURY FOR FINCEN
DEA FOR OILS AND OFFICE OF DIVERSION CONTROL
CIA FOR CNC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KCRM](#) [SNAR](#) [SN](#)

SUBJECT: SINGAPORE 2005 INCSR REPORT PART I -- DRUG AND
CHEMICAL CONTROL

REF: STATE

1. Paragraph 2 contains Embassy Singapore's submission for the 2005-2006 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report Part I - Drug and Chemical Control. Part II will be submitted septel.

2. Begin Text:

I. Summary

The Government of Singapore (GOS) effectively enforces its stringent counter narcotics policies through strict laws (including the death penalty), vigorous law enforcement, and active prevention programs. Singapore is not a producer of precursor chemicals or narcotics, but as a major regional financial and transportation center it is an attractive target for money launderers and drug transshipment. Corruption cases involving Singapore's counter narcotics and law enforcement agencies are rare, and their officers regularly attend U.S.-sponsored training programs (as well as regional forums on drug control).

Singapore is experiencing a decrease in narcotics trafficking and abuse. According to GOS statistics, the number of drug abusers arrested decreased by 47 percent, from 1,809 in 2003 to 955 in 2004 - the lowest number recorded in 20 years. Similarly, the number of new abusers arrested also decreased, by 17 percent (to 604 new users) compared to 2003. Synthetic drug abusers displaced heroin abusers as the largest group of abusers in 2004, making up 56 percent of those arrested. Singapore is a party to the 1988 UN Drug Convention.

II. Status of Country

In 2005, there was no known production of illicit narcotics or precursor chemicals in Singapore. While Singapore itself is not a known transit point for drugs or precursor chemicals, it is the busiest transshipment port in the world, and the volume of cargo passing through its port makes it likely that some illicit shipments of drugs and chemicals do pass through Singapore.

III. Country Actions Against Drugs in 2005

Policy Initiatives. Singapore has continued to pursue a strategy of demand and supply reduction for drugs. This plan has meant that, in addition to arresting drug traffickers, Singapore has also focused on arresting and detaining drug abusers for treatment and rehabilitation. Singaporeans and permanent residents are subject to random drug tests. In addition, the Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) gives the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) the authority to commit all drug abusers to drug rehabilitation centers for mandatory treatment and rehabilitation.

Law Enforcement Efforts. According to the most recent statistics available, arrests for drug-related offenses registered a sharp decline of 47 percent from 1,809 in 2003 to 955 in 2004. The number of persons detained for trafficking offenses and arrests for abuse and possession all declined. Arrests of heroin abusers fell by 80 percent, from 567 arrests in 2003 to 111 in 2004. The predominance of synthetic drugs is reflected in the composition of abusers arrested in 2004. Synthetic drugs include MDMA (Ecstasy), methamphetamine and ketamine; together they accounted for 56 percent of abusers arrested. Singapore government statistics for 2004 show the composition of abusers by drug type is as follows: 32 percent ketamine; 20 percent nimetazepam; 13.1 percent methamphetamine; 12.3 percent marijuana; 11.6 percent heroine; 10.6 percent MDMA; and 0.4 percent cocaine.

In 2004, authorities executed 48 major operations during which they dismantled 24 drug syndicates. In September 2005, CNB made the largest ketamine seizure in Singapore history, yielding 3.24 kilograms. CNB seized 16,235 methamphetamine tablets ("Ya ba") in 2004, compared to 34,853 tablets seized in 2003. CNB seized 156,922 nimetazepam tablets in 2004, the largest amount seized since 1992 when nimetazepam became a

controlled drug.

Corruption. The CNB is charged with the enforcement of Singapore's counter narcotics laws. The CNB and other elements of the government are effective and Singapore is widely recognized as one of the least corrupt countries in the world. Neither the government nor any senior government officials engage in, encourage or facilitate the production or distribution of narcotics or other controlled substances, or the laundering of proceeds from illegal drug transactions.

Agreements and Treaties. Singapore is a party to the 1988 UN Drug convention, the 1961 UN Single convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1972 Protocol amending the Single Convention, and the 1971 UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances. Singapore and the United States continue to cooperate in extradition matters under the 1931 U.S.-U.K. extradition treaty. On November 3, 2000, Singapore and the United States signed a Drug Designation Agreement (DDA), strengthening existing cooperation between the two countries on drug cases. In the past, the lack of such a bilateral agreement had been an occasional handicap. The agreement provides for cooperation in asset forfeiture and sharing of proceeds in narcotics cases; in 2002, one joint case resulted in a \$1.9 million seizure of assets in Singaporean bank accounts. The DDA has also facilitated the exchange of banking and corporate information on drug money laundering suspects and targets. This includes access to bank records, testimony of witnesses, and service of process. The DDA is the first such agreement Singapore has undertaken with another government. Singapore has signed mutual legal assistance agreements with Hong Kong and ASEAN; the United States and Singapore have held discussions on a possible bilateral Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT). Singapore signed the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in December 2000.

Cultivation/Production. There was no known cultivation or production of narcotics in Singapore in 2004 or 2005.

Drug Flow/Transit. Singapore has the busiest (in tonnage) seaport in the world. Approximately 80 to 90 percent of the goods handled by its port are in transit or being transshipped, and do not enter Singapore's customs area. Due to the extraordinary volume of cargo shipped through the port, it is likely that some of that cargo contains illicit materials. Singapore does not require shipping lines to submit data on the contents of most transshipment or transit cargo unless there is a Singapore consignee to the transaction. The lack of such information makes enforcement a challenge -- customs authorities rely on intelligence to discover and interdict illegal shipments. Absent specific information about a drug shipment, GOS officials have been reluctant to impose tighter reporting or inspection requirements at the port out of concern that this would interfere with the free flow of goods and thus jeopardize Singapore's position as the region's primary transshipment port. However, scrutiny of goods at ports has increased. In January 2003, Singapore's new export control law went into effect; while the law seeks to prevent the flow of weapons of mass destruction-related goods, the controls introduce scrutiny on some transshipped cargo. In March 2004, Singapore became the first Asian port to commence operations under the U.S. Container Security Initiative (CSI), under which U.S. Customs personnel prescreen U.S.-bound cargo. While this initiative also is aimed at preventing WMD from entering the United States, the increased information and scrutiny could also aid drug interdiction efforts.

The CNB works with the DEA to closely track the import of modest amounts of precursor chemicals for legitimate procession and use in Singapore. CNB's precursor unit monitors and investigates any suspected diversion of precursors for illicit use. The CNB also monitors precursor chemicals that are transshipped through Singapore to other regional countries, although, as noted above, data on transshipment and transit cargo are limited. Singapore notifies the country of final destination before exporting transshipped precursor chemicals.

Domestic Programs (Demand Reduction). Singapore uses a combination of punishment and rehabilitation against first-time drug offenders. Many first-time offenders are given rehabilitation instead of jail time, although the rehabilitation regime is mandatory and rigorous. The government may detain addicts for rehabilitation up to three years. In an effort to discourage drug use during travel abroad, CNB officers may require urinalysis tests for Singapore citizens and permanent residents returning from outside the country. Those who test positive are treated as if they consumed the illegal drug in Singapore.

Adopting the theme "Prevention: The Best Remedy," Singapore authorities organize sporting events, concerts, plays, and other activities to reach out to all segments of society on drug prevention. Drug treatment centers, halfway houses, and job placement programs exist to help addicts reintegrate into

society. At the same time, the GOS has toughened anti-recidivist law. Three-time offenders face long mandatory sentences and caning. Depending on the amount of drugs carried, convicted drug traffickers are subject to the death penalty, regardless of nationality.

IV. U.S. Policy Initiatives and Programs

Singapore and the United States continue to enjoy good law enforcement cooperation. In fiscal year 2005, approximately 33 GOS law enforcement officials attended training courses at the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Bangkok on a variety of transnational crime topics. The GOS has cooperated extensively, with the United States and other countries, in drug money laundering cases, including some sharing of recovered assets.

The Road Ahead. The United States will continue to work closely with Singapore authorities on all narcotics trafficking and related matters. Increased customs cooperation under the Container Security Initiative and other initiatives and the prospect of a broad MLAT agreement will help further bolster law enforcement cooperation.

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